

SUBJECT: Allowing courts to order name changes to match criminal records

COMMITTEE: Corrections — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 9 ayes — White, Allen, Bailes, Bowers, Dean, Morales, Neave, Sherman, Stephenson
0 nays

WITNESSES: For — Phillip Pierce, Operation ID, Main Street Ministries

Against — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Cheri Siegelin, Texas Correctional Employees-Huntsville)

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Sharon Howell, Texas Department of Criminal Justice)

BACKGROUND: Family Code sec. 45.103(b) allows a court to order a name change for an individual with a final felony convictions if the court finds that the change is to the benefit of the petitioner and in the public interest and if the individual:

- received a certificate of discharge by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice or completed a period of community supervision or juvenile probation, and at least two years had passed since the discharge or completion of community supervision or juvenile probation; or
- was pardoned.

Sec. 45.103(c) allows a court to order a name change for an individual required to register as a sex offender if the change is in the interest or to the benefit of the petitioner and in the interest of the public and the individual provided proof to the court that the individual had notified the appropriate local law enforcement authority of the proposed change.

DIGEST: HB 2623 would allow courts to order a change of name for an individual

with a final felony conviction or who was required to register as sex offender if the individual requested to change the individual's name to the primary name used in their criminal history record information.

An individual required to register as a sex offender also would be required to provide proof to the court that the individual had notified the appropriate local law enforcement authorities of the proposed change.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019, and would apply to petitions for name changes filed on or after that date.